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Mr John Fryer
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Dear Mr Fryer

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Broomfield South SILC

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that all leaders use the information they collect about the quality of teaching to pinpoint which aspects of teachers' practice need further work
- make sure that pupils' development of social communication skills is consistently well-supported throughout the school
- make sure that the sixth form curriculum equips students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be well-prepared for their next stage of learning and adult lives
- ensure that pupils' learning is assessed and accredited at an appropriate level at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the principal, senior and middle leaders, a representative of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I visited lessons with senior leaders, talked to pupils and sixth form students and looked at the work in their books and folders. I evaluated the school's action plan and looked at documents relating to governance, self-evaluation and pupils' progress.

Main findings

Senior leaders have a more accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas requiring improvement. For example, senior leaders are using a wider range of monitoring information to pinpoint which aspects of teachers' practice need further work. Although improving, some checks on the quality of teaching lack the sharpness and precision needed to secure rapid improvement. The school's action plan is clearly linked to the areas needing further work and leaders are acting quickly and decisively to improve teaching and achieve better outcomes for pupils.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. In the early years and in a mixed-age primary class, for example, learning activities were closely matched to pupils' interests and levels of ability and sharply focused on their next steps in learning. As a result, pupils learned well and made fast progress. Also, in a key stage 4 class, pupils spoke confidently and with interest about the features of biographical writing as a result of the teacher's effective questioning. On other occasions, however, pupils' learning is held back because learning activities are not pitched at the right level. Equally, the development of pupils' social communication skills is not consistently well-supported and, as a result, pupils do not develop these critically important skills well enough.

The accuracy and reliability of assessment information is improving. This is because teachers are assessing pupils' learning more frequently and leaders are checking that teachers' assessments match the standard of work in pupils' books. Pupils' progress is tracked more carefully and there is an improving trend in the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science. Further work is needed to develop the curriculum and how pupils' work is assessed and accredited at key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Similarly, more needs to be done to check whether pupils are acquiring and developing the wider knowledge, skills and understanding needed to progress on to further study, training or employment.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are improving. The better-quality work in mathematics workbooks, for example, is evidence of pupils' more positive attitudes and growing pride in their work. Sixth form students spoke proudly and confidently about their work and the good quality help and support they receive. Some aspects

of the sixth form curriculum, however, do not focus sharply enough on preparing students for their next stage of learning and adult lives.

Following the section 5 inspection, an external review of governance was commissioned and completed quickly. The recommendations are clear and all are identified in the governing body's action plan. Importantly, all governors must have the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge senior leaders and hold them robustly to account for all aspects of the school's effectiveness.

External support

Well-planned and carefully coordinated external support, including support from an outstanding special school, is adding to the drive for improvement at Broomfield South SILC. Crucially, leaders value the support they are receiving because it is helping them to check whether they have a clear and fully rounded view of the school's effectiveness.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector